

SOCIAL ACTION

VOL. 9

NO. 8

AUGUST 1959

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This Side and That

Community Development

The Ministry of Community Development is relentlessly pursuing its onerous task of fostering the community spirit in all its projects which will soon cover the whole countryside. It has come to realise more than ever that the programme as it stands at present has little chance of achieving its democratic purpose as long as it is dominated by Government agencies. Hence it is planning to pass initiative as well as implementation of democratic growth from officials to villagers. The key solution will be found in the panchayats and cooperatives at the block and district levels. The extension programme will be entrusted to such village organisations and to village labour, and only technical guidance will be assigned to the C. D. staff. The Ministries will, however, promote research in the people's difficulties and evolve policies which are in tune with the people's requirements and capacities.

One can rest assured that under the tireless initiative of Mr. S. K. Dey a decisive effort will be made to awaken our peasantry to the highest level of its democratic possibilities. A crucial test of the new endeavour will be the composition of voluntary agencies, like the Adimjati Sevak

Sangh, which focusses its attention on the Scheduled people but which has but too few representatives from among the Scheduled castes and tribes.

Inquisitive Sociologists

Since planning has become a fashionable industry, one can expect that the most notorious planners, the family planners, will leave no stone unturned to push forth their dangerous trade. It is already announced that the 1961 Census will re-introduce queries about religion which secular-minded officials discarded at the last Census. The purpose will be to test and assess the relation between religion and family-planning. As a result, particular denominations which do not fall in step with family-planners will receive renewed attention from the campaigners for national sterility. It never entered the brain-box of nefarious apostles of a septic immorality to resort to the obvious methods practised in Ireland, and to advocate the restraining of the legal age of marriage. What has happened to the basic idea of first evolving a plan to plan the planners?

Ballot Papers

For the next general elections of 1962, the Chief Election Commissioner is preparing a new system of voting. So far the citizen chose what he called his "representative" by casting his ballot-paper in one of the many boxes bearing a given symbol. At the next elections there will be only one big box in which to cast one's ballot, but each ballot-paper will display all the symbols of candidates and the citizen will be instructed to mark out the candidate or at least the symbol he prefers, bullock, lion, tiger, kettle, broom or any of the animals or gadgets which candidates will fancy as best picturing their mentality, and defying the wits of cartoonists. The method will imply bigger, though fewer boxes and ballot papers: it will call for the hurried printing and distribution of papers within the thirty days

between the finalising of lists of approved candidates and the date of elections.

From the experience of recent by-elections, one can foresee rarer cases of interchanging of ballot-papers between boxes but also a substantial increase of invalid votes due to faulty marking. Intensive propaganda and sample training throughout the countryside will be needed, though it will be a far easier task than educating our peasants to planned food production or co-operative farming.

Ex-temporising

Educators, educationists and educationalists are all agreed that ex-tempore speaking is an art which demands complete mastery of language, facts, circumstances and doctrine. With our political leaders being shunted from place to place and being called upon to deliver orations on bridge-opening, furnace-lighting, board-meeting, dam-in-augurating and all varieties of ceremonies which lesser dignitaries could well handle, it is inevitable that regrettable lapses occur now and then. Even so well-informed and word-equipped a speaker as our Prime Minister fell short of the mark in recent ex-tempore speeches he delivered in his over-taxed routine work.

Did he not attract indignant retorts when he denounced the Vivian Bose report on the L. I. C. — Mundra deal and blamed this former judge of the Supreme Court for "lack of intelligence"? Would not a larger measure of preparation which is needed for ex-temporising have avoided the ugly stir among judges of the High Courts and Supreme Court which followed his indiscreet remarks, and called for an apology?

Would not fuller information about facts have polished his off-the-cuff remarks at Bangalore? Was it not a bout of

rash oratory to declare that the Hindusthan Machine Tool Factory had improved in output and management since it was taken over by Indian hands when the Swiss manager is still at the head? Was it not unfortunate that the Swiss Minister was thus provoked to reply publicly: "We hope such a speech will not be repeated; otherwise efforts to assist economically underdeveloped countries would be greatly discouraged?" Does the habit of extempore oratory excuse this ruffling of Swiss equanimity?

Does that habit justify the declaration to the Ootacamund public that he has no religion, not even the fear of God? Such a piece of confidential talk could only irritate God-fearing people of India. More particularly it could only distress and dismay the Kerala Christian Congressmen who read in the Bible: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" and who are prone to add *sotto voce* that the fear of Nikita marks the end of wisdom.

Like lapses from good speaking and from sound thinking are clear cautions against the hurried and relentless routine demanded from our Ministers; they should be allowed more leisure and even full holidays, and the people should forego the pleasure of ministerial visits if they want the masterly servants of the nation to discharge their tasks with satisfaction.

Red Sunset

The more conditions deteriorated in Kerala, the clearer and brighter the situation became, whatever be the mutterings of wishy washy wobblers in Parliament and in the Press. The opposition parties drew closer, the values at stake appeared more obvious to the local organisations, the will to survive as free citizens rose to fever pitch. Distant leaders and observers fondled the delusion that it was all a mere

struggle for political or economic advantages, and they remained hypnotized by the verbal democracy of the Reds. The men on the spot grew aware that Communist party-men are philosophers bent on achieving their dream of materialistic totalitarianism and obstinately pursuing their monopolistic dictatorship through a maze of compromises and legal zigzags.

Catholic initiative did much to enlighten the public mind, and to stir up public conscience. The recent tragedies in Hungary and Tibet afforded illustrations at hand. The Congress, the P. S. P., the Muslim League and others came to realise that the struggle was for values which were not less elevated and urgent than the values which had inspired the struggle for political independence. The notorious Education Act was a neat pointer ; it did not involve mere financial management of schools, but implied a state-monopoly on teachers' ideology ; it went beyond dictatorship in secular education, and promoted Communist ideas and ideals along with atheistic education. The other measures, vexations, promotions, demotions and administrative zigzags were all of a go with the Education Act.

Hence the opposition parties decided on "direct action", not the type of direct action which had led to the Great Calcutta Killing of 1946, but the fervid non-cooperation which had brought success to the national movement. Many outsiders are fidgety about the legal niceties of democratic resistance, but the Kerala people know they are fighting for the contents of our democratic constitution, civic freedom, religious liberty and cultural autonomy ; they have rendered India a great service by unmasking and fighting the totalitarian oppression pursued by the sycophantic policy of our local brand of international Communism. Let them not grow remiss in their noble struggle !

A. L.

The Lady and the Lamp

The formal and festive occasion of a graduation ceremony, with all its colourful pomp and pageantry brings joy to the minds of everyone who takes part in it, not merely because it marks the end of a period of hard work and study, but also because it opens up prospects of a vocational career which is socially useful and creative. The graduate nurse, at any rate, ought to feel this more distinctively than graduates in arts or science subjects, because the emphasis throughout the period of the professional training of a nurse is on practical aspects of the profession.

The role of a nurse in a modern hospital is such that on the one hand the standard of professional knowledge demanded of her is not very much lower than that of a medical graduate. She has to possess a working knowledge of body chemistry, the structure and functions of the human body, and should have an intelligent grasp of the techniques which will enable her to detect the first signs of serious disorders and critical conditions in the patients entrusted to her care and attention. On the other hand, the nurse must also be an expert in the handling of the patient and must possess a way of dealing with different people, each having his or her peculiarities of disposition, temperament and character. Towards the well-being of patients in the hospital, the nurse has, in fact, more to contribute than the doctor; and it is no exaggeration to say that the greater part of the success of a doctor's efforts will depend on how well the nurse fulfils her duties. It will thus be evident that basically the social usefulness of a nurse has two sides — first, with regard to the restoration of sick people to a state of normal health; and secondly, with regard to the achievement of the doctor who has to depend to a very great extent on the nurse's co-operation. On this joyous

occasion which brings so many of you at the threshold of a highly important and socially useful occupation, it is appropriate that these facts should be emphasised.

The Nurse's Vocation

When one speaks of nursing as a vocation, one should remember the special meaning attaching to this word. In the workday world, people usually expect to get something in return for the work which they have done, and over which they have spent their energy. Work is commonly regarded as a kind of investment, for which some sort of compensation is legitimately due. Moreover, in the common run of life, people usually want quick and large returns for small outlays. On the other hand, in the case of those whose common aim or purpose is to achieve something higher than material gain, the use of material resources and the exercise of human effort are regarded as a gift, not as an investment. The desire to serve is, in other words, born not of a motive for advantage to oneself but of an interest to secure the happiness and well-being of the people who are served. In this fact lies the essence of the concept of a vocation.

Secondly, the choice of a vocation is made voluntarily, of one's own accord, rather than by any kind of pressure or compulsion. Our best gifts to mankind are those which we make of our own free will, not those which are extracted from us or extorted out of us. There is always something unpleasant about forcing, whether one forces someone else to do something or to give something. The person who compels another person would not like to be forced into doing or saying the same thing. The person under compulsion will yield grudgingly and unwillingly and may even resist, if he or she feels strong enough to oppose the pressure. Since the work of a nurse calls for the constant exercise of the nobler qualities of human nature — tact,

prudence, patience, gentleness, sympathy, kindness, cheerfulness, determination, thoughtfulness and many other qualities like these — it is only by choosing of one's own free will to serve as a nurse that one may ever hope to cultivate these excellent qualities.

A third point to remember in connection with the nurse's vocation, as with any other kind of vocation, is that it calls for a spirit of dedication or offering oneself for others. This spirit of dedication expresses itself in certain positive attitudes towards oneself, towards one's work, and towards others. Every kind of human effort brings to the person who makes that effort some amount of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. As a rule, if the effort leads to a successful result, success brings satisfaction. If the effort is blocked by some difficulties or hindrances, one feels frustrated and it gives rise to dissatisfaction. Those of you who have had some experience of cooking know very well that when something you prepare in the kitchen turns out well, it makes you feel satisfied. It smells good, the taste is excellent, and everybody says what a nice dish you have prepared. If, on the other hand, the fire is too strong and the 'masala' gets burnt, or you add too much salt, with the result that your guest does not relish your cooking, that would make you more unhappy than your guest. Anyone who works must, in order to work well, derive some satisfaction out of the job. All the same, the feeling of satisfaction which one gets or which one may bring to others by doing some work is not everything. Behind that feeling it is necessary that one should cherish an attitude of detachment, which is the most essential component of the spirit of dedication.

By detachment is meant the feeling that what is done is done for the achievement of a good result, or to put it in the language of the religious, for the glory of God and

not for personal gratification. The attitude of detachment naturally sets aside the sense of personal pride, vanity, or dignity, in the desire to secure the highest good of those who are being served. For example, the nurse in a ward might have to handle dirt and filth; but she has to do it with the feeling that in doing so she is merely cleaning up some spot which was dirty, and is replacing what was soiled by what is unsoiled. She ought not to entertain any idea of defilement by touching what is unclean but should rather act with the purpose of purifying what is impure.

The spirit of dedication implies, among other things, a positive attitude towards one's own sufferings. Most people, when they suffer, tend to feel sorry for themselves. It is a common human weakness to regard one's suffering as unmerited or else to find some justification for one's sufferings. The person who is actuated by a spirit of dedication is not however moved to self-pity or self-reproach. It is not necessary that one should suffer needlessly or unnecessarily. All the same, when suffering has to be endured, it must be accepted in a spirit of resignation, without any feeling of pity for oneself. It is, therefore, well worth remembering the words of a prayer which one might recite to oneself every morning "O my God, I offer to Thee all my thoughts, words, actions and sufferings this day."

Such then is the picture which I would like to paint before you of the nurses vocation, which, to my way of thinking, is a sublime vocation calling for a spirit of service, a spirit of voluntary sacrifice, and a spirit of dedication.

The Nurse's Responsibilities

Every profession carries with it certain special responsibilities; and the nursing profession is no exception. A school teacher, for example, must know his subject well, and put every idea clearly before his pupils. He ought to

be able to find out where his pupils go wrong in learning their lessons and should be able to correct them in the right way. A lawyer should possess a good grasp of the law and he must be able to present the case of his clients in a court in such a way that the client will not be the victim of an injustice. What then are the special responsibilities of the professional nurse? Many years ago, Pope Pius XI described the nurse as "a person who thinks, judges, and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with the right reason." These words indicate in broad outline the general responsibilities of a nurse. More recently, the late Pope Pius XII, in his address to the Union of Nurses in Rome, emphasised five points regarding the special responsibilities of a nurse; and it would be appropriate to mention them on this occasion.

First, a nurse has to be *calm, methodical and attentive*. On the street, one often sees groups of people moving about, each on his own business; but they merely come and go — they keep moving on. In the wards of a hospital, like the street, people come and go, for the hospital is nobody's home. Still, they remain there for a while and while they are there, they need the attention of the doctor and the nurse alike. The suffering person usually weeps and wails or groans in agony; many suffer in silence. The nurse has to serve them all, understanding each one's needs, and meeting those needs in an orderly way — without excitement, hurry or worry.

Secondly, the nurse has to be *tactful and discreet*. Tact has to be exercised by a nurse not only in her dealings with patients, but also with doctors. Often the nurse may find it necessary to be more tactful with the doctor than with the patient. The doctor must be treated with respect, and his authority upheld. The patient should never be made to feel embarrassed, confused or anxious. The es-

sence of tact in dealing with patients would lie in not saying the wrong thing at the wrong time — for that matter, not even the right thing at the wrong time. It is, therefore, necessary for the nurse to understand every patient, and to think before saying anything in answer to the anxious queries of patients. Being discreet is the crowning virtue of a nurse, a person bound to observe professional secrecy. By the very nature of her work she is morally obliged to keep to herself what a patient tells her in confidence or while in delirium, particularly when the information is likely to be harmful to the reputation of the patient or his family.

Thirdly, it is the responsibility of a nurse to be *sensitive* to the changing moods and conditions of the patient. Under the stress of pains and bodily discomfort, even those who are normally calm and quiet may burst into fits of depression or excitement. The nurse must have an eye for small changes in the condition of the patient and take all possible precautions dictated by hygiene and prudence.

Fourthly, *truthfulness* in the relations with doctors, the sick and their families is an important obligation. This is so because the sick person has a right to believe what the nurse tells him. Sometimes it may be a question of the health of the soul as well as that of the body. It may easily be a serious sin to put off the patient's preparation for the long journey to eternity.

Fifthly, the most important responsibility of the nurse is towards her own conscience. A nurse who is lacking in *moral strength* and who does not possess the courage of her convictions cannot fulfil the higher demands of her profession. There are many delicate problems which confront nurses in hospitals today. The most widely discussed problem in India today is what arises out of the seemingly innocent title "Planned Parenthood". Whether it is right

for parents to bring forth as many children as they desire, is a matter on which everyone in this country may not agree. Yet no one attempts to curb the yield of a mango tree, for instance. The more mangoes it yields, the better is the tree regarded to be. Every mango contains a seed and every seed is capable of growing into another mango tree. If, for example, one tree yields five hundred fruits in a year, that could produce five hundred more mango trees. If this rate of multiplication were to continue, the world might in time become a forest of mango trees, but no one feels alarmed at this possibility in the multiplication of mango trees. When it comes to human-beings, who are without doubt more sacred than mango trees, people get worried and say; "let us stop this terrible increase in the number of human-beings." The extreme to which this point of view has been carried during recent years, will be evident from a contemporary newspaper report to the effect that one of the State Governments has offered nurses a reward of Rs. 2/- for every man who could be persuaded to get himself sterilised. One hardly needs to invoke an appeal to conscience in deprecating such measures, which no nurse with any element of moral strength would agree to implement.

"You are well aware", said Pope Pius XII, "that to-day people go for treatment to hospitals, clinics and sanatoriums thus giving you an ever wider scope for your beneficial work. It might be said that this work penetrates almost every home. Therefore, it is our earnest desire that you gain an ever clearer knowledge of your responsibilities and an ever more ardent will to carry them out fully."

The Nurse's Influence

At the purely human level, what counts more than anything else in modern societies is the extent to which

what a person may say or do will influence other people. It is well-known also that for some reason or other, bad influences are more powerful than good ones. It is of paramount importance therefore that some consideration should be given to the deeper values which a nurse ought to allow herself to permeate within her. "In your life," said Pope Pius XII, "you have so many dangers to overcome, that without super-natural help it would be impossible for you to triumph constantly over human weaknesses. Within yourselves you must cultivate the spirit of self-denial, purity of heart and fineness of a conscience so that your service may be truly an act of super natural charity, demanded by the Christian faith."

In Charity lies the real secret of all that is highest and best in human influences, for the essence of charity would lie in giving oneself for the benefit of others. 'Charity' is a frequently misused word, since it is often imagined that charity consists in giving money to beggars. A rich man, spending lots of his spare money on building hospitals for poor people may think that he has been charitable. This would be not charity, but *philanthropy*. The French Professor, Fredrick Ozanam, said that philanthropy is "a vain woman who likes to deck herself in her good works and admire herself in the glass, whereas charity is a mother whose eyes rest lovingly on the child at her breast, who has no thought of self, but forgets her beauty in her love." Charity stems from one's love for God. It is a concrete fact, which goes beyond a mere feeling inside someone's heart, of a deep and abiding love for the Almighty. "Let us love God, my brethren," said St. Vincent de Paul, "Let us love God, but let it be at the expense of our arms and in the sweat of our brow."

We thus arrive at the image of the mother in our effort to set before ourselves a pattern of supernatural charity ;

and what maternal figure can ever surpass that of the Immaculate Virgin and the Child — the Mother of God, who holds in her hands the Light of Everlasting Wisdom. That is exactly why this address bears the title "The Lady and the Lamp." The beams of light radiating from the Lamp which Our Lady holds up before the world, darkened as it is by envy, greed, injustice, suffering and death, brighten the hearts of those who will but gaze on it, and who see in that light an undying love which gives radiant joy and abundant life. Maurice Zundel, the Swiss thinker, has expressed this notion in the most forceful manner possible; "If you have ever seen a nun bending over the bed of a dying man left by his own to his misery, and uttering the words which give him back his childhood, you will have the figure of the maid of Nazereth, bending over a world in agony with all the tenderness of a charity which suffers immeasurably more from its compassion than the sufferer from his disease; for she knows what is the disease with which all are ill and who must be the Victim for all their wounds."

W. T. V. Adiseshiah *

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Successful Credit Co-operatives

There are certain types of cooperatives that are meant to meet certain definite needs. In general they can be classified under the categories of Producers Cooperatives, Consumer Cooperatives, and Credit Cooperatives. The type of cooperative that is here discussed is one that meets the most widespread need that is found both in the rural areas, and in the well established urban neighbourhood. The need is this. How can we teach our people to save, and to save systematically? And secondly, how can we provide them with the small loans at a reasonable rate of interest? Where can our people get the money they need right away to buy medicines for sudden illnesses, for a needed operation, for a burial, for school fees, for books, for terminal examinations, to buy the year's supply of rice, to put a new roof on the house, to buy the raw materials so they can make and sell some product, to get the manures and seeds they need for sowing their fields, replace a dead bullock — or in a word, for the hundred and one reasons that they come to us asking for a loan to help them through this crisis in their lives?

Financially speaking, it is absolutely impossible for us to meet their money needs out of our own resources. And even if we could give them the loans, to say the least, it is bad policy. However, when they can't get those loans from us, unfortunately, many and many of them are forced by circumstances to get that money from the professional money lenders, the banias, the mahajans, the Kabulis. Many of my readers I am sure could relate the sad case history of quite a few people who have fallen into the clutches of these professional money lenders, and the sad moral consequences that have followed.

Credit Co-operative

Now there is a specific type of Cooperative which can go far in meeting and solving this problem. This is the Credit Cooperative, and it is of this type that I wish to concentrate in these pages for two reasons. First, because this problem in India is so very widespread. Second, because this type of cooperative is so simple to set up, and so easy to operate successfully that you need have no fears that this "banking" business is beyond the capabilities of people, even were they from the lowest strata of society. There is still a third reason why I have chosen this type of cooperative, which is perhaps its most important feature and that is its built-in ability to teach people the habit of thrift and of systematic savings.

A Nation's Debts

Now to the widespread prevalence of this problem. India is a debtor nation. Not only in the sense that it is borrowing from foreign nations, but more so in the sense of the tremendous amount of borrowing that the ordinary person, and more so, the poor person must resort to, in order to get along and meet his ordinary daily needs. Just the other year, Sir Malcolm Darling, the Colombo Plan Consultant to the Planning Commission in Delhi, after he had made his study in regard to Cooperatives came up with this bit of information. 80% of all the people in India take loans. And of this 80%, those who are in debt right now because of those loans amount to 73%. Now next to this fact juxtapose the findings of the Rural Credit Survey of 4 years ago which asked and answered the question, "Where do the people get their loans?" And the answer they found is this. 17% get them from within their own joint families or circle of friends. 3% (and this is the figure the Survey insisted so much upon,) get their loans from all Government sources taken together. That is, Government banks, credit societies, cooperative societies, State loans, like *tac-cavi* loans, etc. Add to this the statement of Mr. Dhebar

of last January when he said that from government co-operatives the average for each loan taken was only ten rupees, but the average time lapse between their application for a loan and the granting of it was 4 months. Putting these few facts together it is easy to see then why 80% of the people who take loans, especially in the rural areas, get these loans from private money lenders. Now, let me explain a little bit about some of these professional private money lenders which perhaps will be revealing, and will help pinpoint the problem that a Cooperative Credit Union is designed to help solve.

Moral Problems

Let me introduce this by saying that many of our moral problems are basically economic and social problems. My first example. Some time ago a rather serious theft was committed by a group of our young teen age boys. It just so happened that in the distribution of the loot one of the boys didn't receive his full share, and so the full story eventually came out. The leader who organized the theft came from a situation like this. A family of eight children. Seven of school age. The father a minor government peon. His monthly salary, 70 rupees. He had taken a 400 rupee loan from a local professional money lender, a Kabuli on which he was paying interest of 2 annas per rupee per month, a mere 150% a year. Each month on pay day the Kabuli was present to claim his 800 annas, i.e. 50 rupees. So the father had 20 rupees a month left for food, shelter, clothing, medicines etc. for a family of ten. Is there any wonder why such a teen age boy in such circumstances would steal? And the debt went on and on simply because he couldn't begin to pay off the principal because the interest rate was so exorbitant.

Another Example

My second example is this. A large group of people in a particular locality are wheelrights, carpenters making

the wooden wheels for *bilegaris*. They work hard, long hours, for many months of the year. But the figures of their expenses and income broken down are these. It takes about 100 hours to make a pair of wheels. So at 8 hours a day that is practically a full two weeks counting Sundays off. The wheels are sold on an average of 60 rupees a pair. Their expenses for wood, for hauling from the jungles, the axles and iron from the Lohars, the sawers, runs to about 35 rupees a pair. So a profit of 25 rupees for two weeks work, or 50 rupees a month. That isn't much to support their family. Add to this another element. There wasn't enough profit to save in order to buy the wood for next year's work. The inevitable result, a loan from the local mahajans. The rate of interest usually 1 anna on a rupee a month, i.e., 75% a year interest. The average carpenter took a loan of 200 rupees. So for those 200 rupees he paid back 150 rupees in interest alone. Since his profit was 50 rupees a month that meant that he was giving the complete profits of 3 full months of work, eight hours a day, into the hands of the Mahajans, just to pay off the interest on his loan.

Add to this another element. Over the years what has happened? When the interest couldn't be paid it was added to the principle and the interest was compounded. When all hope of collecting the interest dried up then the poor man was taken to court and his property attached. The result was that many lost their homes in this locality. Another result was that some in order to meet their obligations sublet one or two of their rooms to other families. And this resulted in the unfortunate situation of adolescent boys and girls growing up together in the same joint family house, and the result of this situation is I'm sure quite apparent to all. A real moral problem, yes, but basically a social and economic problem.

So there is the problem in an actual situation. And the question is how get such people the loans they need, when they need them at a reasonable rate of interest? And furthermore when they can save, how instil in them a habit of systematic thrift?

A real help in solving that problem is the Cooperative Credit Union which is designed for just such a situation. I shall indicate briefly what has been accomplished in the above mentioned situation by a Credit Union which has been in existence for only three years in a Catholic parish.

The Credit Co-operative

Some advance publicity in the form of a question and answer leaflet about a Credit Union was passed out after the religious service on Sunday. Then a general meeting of all interested was called. An explanation was given and the advantages of such an organization in the parish were pointed out. Much insistence was placed on the implications of the Doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ and the necessity of bring the practice of this Doctrine down into our everyday life, in our everyday quest for food, shelter and clothing. Then 15 or 20 volunteers were called for who would sit down for a period of months and study the workings of such a Credit Union. This group met once a week for about six months. Then they went out into the parish and explained to others what they had learned in the study sessions. Finally an Organizational Meeting was called for all. The Credit Union began with a capital of 1,000 rupees, and 100 members. Today only three years later the figures in round numbers are these. The people's savings in Shares and Deposits amount to 50,000 rupees, there are now 300 members, and loans totalling 30,000 rupees have been given out. Of this Rs. 25,000 has come back, and Rs. 5,000 is still current in loans. About 300 members have taken loans, of this number 2 were bad loans, but against

this the Society is perfectly protected, (the how of this I will mention in a moment). Two bad loans out of 300 given is a mighty fine average considering particularly the history of Cooperatives in India where the average of uncollectable loans is over 50%. Why this difference? In a great measure it is due to the motivating spiritual principles and also to the built-in preventative against bad loans that characterizes this specialized type of Credit Cooperative.

Now briefly what is the significance of these figures? Let me point out only two things. First the amount of savings, added to the fact that previous to the establishment of the Credit Union in the parish 75% of the members had no savings deposit e.g., in Postal Savings or the State Bank. Their money had been put into jewelry, kept in a box in the house, or more commonly not saved at all.

The second significant figure is the 30,000 rupees that were given out in loans to 300 members. Look at the tremendous saving these loans have been for those members. They needed those loans and they would have taken them most probably from the local mahajans as they had been doing for years, had they not been able to get them from the Parish Credit Union. Had they taken them from the mahajans they would have paid the usual interest of one anna on the rupee per month, and that is 75% interest a year. On 30,000 rupees the interest that would have been paid amounts to 22,500 rupees. That is only interest. And that amount would have gone out of parish into the hands of our local loan sharks. However the interest rate that they pay back to the Parish Credit Union amounts to about 6% a year. When all the loans are paid back they will have paid into the Credit Union about 1,800 rupees in interest. So instead of 22,500 rupees in interest, they pay 1,800 rupees. And that means a saving of over 20,500 rupees for the people of the parish, in a period of 3 years. The

parish is that much richer, possesses that much more purchasing power, as a result of the presence of the Parish Credit Union. Another element to be considered is that even that 1,800 rupees which is part of the profits of the Credit Union is given back to the members when the profits of the Society are distributed as dividends to the members at the end of the year. Another notable saving which does not appear on the accounts of the Credit Union is that many of the loans were given to families who bought their year's supply of rice at cutting time. Rice then sold at between 14 and 16 rupees a maund. A few months later it was selling at 32 rupees per maund. Even this was a big savings for those families who had taken those loans. So in three years time, even from these few figures you can see that much has been accomplished for the benefit of our people.

A. Rosenfelder

(To be continued)

Chastity and Health

Health is the real wealth a man possesses on this earth. If money is lost, something is lost. If a reputation is lost, its owner suffers greatly. But if health is lost, the damaging effects are much more grievous.

That personal moral integrity is intimately linked up with health is a truth too often ignored not only by the man-in-the-street, but also by medical graduates and university professors. Wholeness of body or physical health is often consequential to the holiness of the spirit or integrity of mind and heart. The tap root and the elan vital that sustain personal integrity and physical health is purity, chastity, *brahmacharya*.

Nature and medicine

Forgetful of the scriptural injunctions, ignorant of the wisdom of our ancient sages, we rely almost exclusively on medical prescriptions, chemical drugs, surgical operations and injections to cure us of our diseases and regain our lost health. When we run to the nearest physician or chemist for any disease, we often forget that Nature is the repository of health and vitality, that Nature's Laws — the Panchsila of Buddhist ethics and the Ten Commandments of the Mosaic revelation — are the inexhaustible reservoirs of health and happiness. Drugs and chemicals may cover up ailments for a while, but radical cure of any disease cannot be secured without having recourse to Nature and Nature's laws.

Medical men who ignore Nature's cure or shelve spiritual values and ethical injunctions do often fail to diagnose the disease correctly, and therefore are unable to treat not only the symptoms but also the root of the disease properly. Poisonous drugs may heal some symptoms of the disease ;

but often they create more diseases, both organic and functional. Medical men have killed many patients with their drugs without ever being accused of murder, because they hold a license to practise their profession. Some medical men have grown rich, they have become multi-millionaires cashing on their London diplomas or U. S. medical certificates. Few are those brave men and women who pause for a while, and test the accuracy of that medical science that ignores Nature's laws, personal integrity and chastity in the treatment of patients. Nay; the advice to use contraceptives, abortions, unrestrained sexual life have all become part of the regular practice of that medical profession which ignores God, Nature and Chastity.

C. G. Jung, one of the greatest living psycho-analysts of today, has said :

"During the past thirty years, people from all civilised countries of the earth have consulted me. . . . Among all my patients in the second half of life -- that is to say, over thirty-five -- there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain this religious outlook."

— *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, P. 264.

Brahmacharya

What Jung had said of the psychological effects of religion is equally true of ethics and purity of character in the cure of diseases. We can safely say that a good number of diseases, both organic and functional, nervous and psychic, are traceable to impurity of character. Thanks to the modern obscene advertisements, pornographic literature and magazines and the general sex-crazy atmosphere everywhere, modern man is ready to brush aside that traditional wisdom

and spiritual values which sustained the physical and mental health of our forbears, which gave creativity of spirit, longevity and radiant vigour to the wise generations of yore. It is that purity of character which fixed 120 years as the normal life-span of man, as the Isa Upanishad and other Indian Scriptures testify. Patanjali Yoga simply says: "Attainment of energy through the observance of continence" — *Brahmacharya Prtistayam viryalabha* (Yoga. II. 38). Indian Vedic, Upanishadic and Darsanic scriptures are full of this insistence on chastity, *Brahmacharya*, as the fountain of physical health and spiritual salvation. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". Blessed are also the chaste souls for they shall preserve or regain health of body and mind. Tom Mann said: "The future is for nations that are chaste". We can add: perfect health is for those who are pure.

Mahatma Gandhi, who was an accurate research experimentalist of the science of life, said:

"The maintenance of perfect health should be considered almost an utter impossibility without the *brahmacharya* leading to the conservation of the sexual secretions".

— *Key to Health*, P. 46

No amount of tonics, drugs, injections, Nervovitamins and B Complex tablets can cure a man if his mental attitudes and habits of life are not pure. Apart from the physical weakness and nervous breakdown which often follow unrestrained sexual indulgence, few people take note of the psychic wastage and ravages which are working deeper down the psyche and soul of man. Even a few months — and not years of prodigal life — are enough for the libertines to lose that innocent look, that retentive power and that readiness for idealistic adventure. In my own experience I have come across young promising boys, who, after two or three years of dissipated life in the

prostitute quarters of Calcutta, have wrecked their health, sapped their mental vigour and were reduced to life-long invalids and imbeciles. No amount of injections and treatment have restored them back to life. Yet, a few of them, who, through good fortune or God's grace, have amended their ways and learnt the science of chastity, continence and self-restraint, have regained their health, even without chemical drugs and injections.

Birth-Control

The Indian Government has instituted a network of birth control clinics in our land. But have they instituted a ministry for the moral rearmament of the Indian Youth? When our boys and girls are taught that they can indulge in sex without shouldering the responsibility of bearing and rearing children through contraceptives and birth control techniques animal passions, normally so imperious in the thoughtless crowd, are fanned and pampered. The ancient discipline of *Brahmacharya* is today thrown overboard. The film industry has put a premium on vice and exhibits what is sickening as healthy, deadly as life-giving, sinful as virtuous. Yet, where is the film censorship operating? Hundreds of Delhi mothers appealed to the Government to save their children from sexy films which poisons the imaginations, hearts and minds of the teen-agers.

If our film magnates would copy Hollywood stars, why cannot they also follow the example of the great educational, historical and cultural films which were produced in the U. S. ? India has still to produce a counterpart to Cecil de Mille's *Ten Commandments*. We are imitating the West by copying their worst, not their best in the history of human civilization. How quickly we have broadcast and diffused throughout the length and breadth of our country the "true love stories", detective yarns, love songs and comics from the West, the skin-deep sexy features of

Western life, ignoring almost completely the great social institutions of the West, their cultural and spiritual achievements of the past and the present ?

Many of our Indian journals and films are now depicting to our youth that sex instinct is unconquerable, that sexual indulgence is a necessity for self-expression, that marriage is no more a sacrament, but "the grave of love" etc.

Great Thinkers

Sir Lionel Beale, Professor at the Royal College in London, says :

"The example of the best and noblest men has at all times proved that the most imperious of instincts can be effectively resisted by a strong and serious will, and by sufficient care as to manner of life and occupation. Sexual abstinence has never yet hurt any man when it has been observed, not only through exterior restrictive causes, but as a voluntary rule of conduct. Virginity, in fine, is not too hard to observe provided that it is the physical expression of a certain state of mind. Chastity implies not only continence, but also purity of sentiments, the energy which is the result of deep convictions".

Speaking of the beneficent effects of chastity, Professor Montegazza, has this to say :

"All men, and young men in particular, can experience the immediate benefit of chastity. The memory is quiet and tenacious, the brain lively and fertile, the will energetic, the whole character gains a strength of which libertines have no conception. No prism shows us our surroundings under such heavenly colours as that of chastity, which lights up with its rays the least objects in the universe, and transports us into the purest joys of an abiding happiness that knows neither shadow nor decline".

From among great Indians we can marshal authorities like Swami Vivekananda, Ramakrishna, Rabindranath, Sri Aurobindo and others to corroborate the thesis that in the majority of cases diseases are the offspring of sexual dissipation and that the way to regain health and happiness is through chastity or Brahmacharya. Once this fundamental law of life is realised and lived up to, then medical science can hasten recovery of patients and lead them to realms of happiness, peace and bliss.

A. Elenjittam

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION TO SOCIAL ACTION
for 1960

Subscribers are informed that advance subscription for 1960 is now due. Those who have not paid for 1959 already are requested to do so at an early date.

Management Problems in a Jute Mill

Messrs. Shree Bajranga Jute Mills Ltd., a manufacturing concern, engaged in the production of jute bags and twine, and employing around 1500 workers, is located in Guntur, the headquarters of the Guntur District. This mill is the smallest of the four jute mills in Andhra Pradesh. It imports raw material largely from Visakapatnam District and partly from Orissa, while the two other Jute mills located at Chittivalasa and Nellimarla have the advantage of the availability of raw material in the adjoining areas in the same district of Visakapatnam. On the other hand, the Bajranga Jute Mills and the neighbouring Srikrishna Jute Mills at Eluru have the unique advantage of being provided with market facilities for the sale of their finished goods to the cement factories in the same locality.

Recruitment and Training

In this mill no fixed method of recruitment obtains due to the prevailing compulsions of heavy absenteeism and labour turn-over. It has become customary to take in hands whenever they are available and needed. Labourers when recruited through contractors are paid wages according to the output of production, but these are not calculated on the basis of a daily wage rate. Incidentally it may also be mentioned that the skilled workers probably retrenched from the Jute Mills in Calcutta seek employment in this mill. The Labour Office records of this mill show that on an average, around thirty to forty workmen leave their employment every month and about the same number are taken in.

Training is highly desirable in industries like jute to turn new unskilled employees into all-round craftsmen. In this mill, such training is imparted to the employees in the workshop, spinning and weaving sections. It has be-

come almost conventional here for beginners to acquire skill by working in collaboration and under the supervision of senior men. This would mean that no general or technical education is provided by the management to train the workers, so as to make them truly technically-minded, which alone would provide them with the technical skill needed to handle the various types of operations involved in the large amount of mechanisation prevalent in the mill. This explains why the supervisors often encounter difficulties with the employees whenever the production slackens or whenever they are obliged to shift workers from one loom to several, actuated by the desire for effecting an increase in production. It is also not possible to discriminate between skilled and unskilled labour in different departments excepting the Mechanical and Electrical sections. There is no gainsaying the fact that in most of the departments the performance of the workers is manifestly rather mechanical, habitual, inept, and perfunctory, than diligent, skilful and assiduous. That is why it is glaringly apparent for even a casual visitor or observer to watch the so-called mechanics often helpless to rectify the mistakes committed by unskilled workmen in the operation of the machines.

Wages and Incentives

All the workers who are employed in the various departments from Selection to Spinning are paid as minimum basic wages per month Rs. 23—0—0, and a dearness allowance for the same period, Rs. 37—5—0, while the workmen in the spool-winding, Cop-winding, Beaming, Weaving, Hand-cutting, Sewing, Sack-repairing and Baling receive payments on a piece rate basis. Wages are disbursed to the Sardars every week but those in the weaving department are remunerated on a contract basis according to the production on the looms under their charge. The women are paid Rs. 1—10—0 per day inclusive of dearness al-

lowance, for the physical exertion implicit in their work is considered to be less than that of the men. Most of the women in this mill are confined to employment in repairing, folding, spool-winding and barching sections, which are considered to require the delicate caressing and operation of the weaker sex. The Factory Manager and the Overseers form the category of employers who receive wages on a monthly basis. The local workers are often seen to cavil at the comparatively high wages usually paid to those who come from Calcutta.

As a rule no bonus scheme is provided as an incentive to step up production. However, the workers in the weaving section alone are entitled to a reward when they produce more than a certain quantity, viz. 4 annas for the production of 185 yards of gunny in 8 hours in a day, and Rs. 1—8—0 for 1150 yards in a week.

It is well to note that no system of promotion from a lower to a higher grade prevails in this mill. Still more significant is the fact that the top grade jobs are held by labourers imported from Calcutta. No doubt a few old hands who have put in service of 10 years and more have not been denied the privilege of being promoted to the post of Sardars, but they have earned this privilege by the mere efflux of time.

A labour colony of 150 quarters has been provided for the accommodation of workers coming from outside Guntur. This colony is situated in about 6 to 7 acres of levelled ground owned by the mill management. Notwithstanding the amenities provided for the supply of water, it is rather surprising to notice the conspicuous absence of latrines in the colony where approximately 500 individuals reside. The management however has built an elementary school for the benefit of the workers' children. Besides there is a

recreation club, established in the year 1951, equipped with radio and loud speaker, and facilities for outdoor games, cater to the leisure-time activities of the workmen.

Working Conditions

The conditions in the mill are not at all congenial to promote efficiency among the workers ; for the workers are huddled in together with the machines within a limited space, so that they can scarcely stretch their feet while operating the machines. Windows are fitted in the main building only on one side. In a Jute mill it is natural to expect the atmosphere within the building to be saturated with the dust emanating from the crushing and pressing of raw jute, and the jute mill we are discussing here is no exception. Nor has any provision been made to disperse or diffuse the noise of the machinery. The workers easily feel enervated and listless, consequent on the suffocation by lack of air, and the nervous tension produced by the noise of the machines. This may partly explain the irritability noticeable among both the employees and the staff.

On the other hand, there is an ample supply of water available from the municipality. The management have also installed a water cooler to provide cool and iced water. There is a canteen run on a non-profit basis, a Creche for the workers' children, and an ambulance room. In the mill premises the workers have been furnished with a rest house in which to spend their leisure moments during work intervals. Similarly the supervisory staff have been provided with a mess-cum-lodging house. The other benefits provided for by the mill include the Employee's State Insurance and Provident Fund contributions.

Absenteeism and Labour Turn-over

From an on-the-spot study of the mill, the inference can be drawn that apart from the environmental and factory conditions in general, certain factors inherent in every

individual worker have contributed towards absence from work. For instance, the lack of occupation adjustment on the part of the workers is one of the major factors of absenteeism. It is also noticed that prevalence of absenteeism is more pronounced among workers hailing from Guntur than those coming from Calcutta. Incidentally, it may be pointed out that skilled workers took leave of absence more often than the unskilled workers.

For ready reference the rate of absenteeism in each month during the period 1955-58 is listed in the following table :—

MONTH	1955	1956	1957	1958
January	5.77	5.99	6.23	6.64
February	5.96	6.74	6.25	6.73
March	6.49	7.10	7.14	7.61
April	6.50	7.09	7.20	7.71
May	7.76	7.16	7.51	8.21
June	6.19	7.17	6.97	7.25
July	6.15	6.68	6.99	7.27
August	6.02	6.97	6.23	7.03
September	5.73	6.76	5.99	—
October	5.67	6.87	5.15	—
November	5.32	5.89	5.19	—
December	5.07	5.87	5.17	—

The reasons given for requesting leave of absence are ill-health or urgent needs of parents or relatives. However it is obvious from an examination of the records that the rate of absenteeism rises and falls during particular periods of the year. On the other hand, it has been observed that the labour turnover shows a tendency to decrease in the mill.

The Trade Union

The only workers union named the Jute Mill Workers Union, Guntur, and registered in the year 1951, is affiliated

to the All India Trade Union Congress. As it happens this union is under the domination of the communist party; the chairman is a local communist leader, while the Secretary and the joint secretary are from among the mill workers. Each member has to pay Rs. 1.00 per year towards the membership of the union. To sustain the activities of the union it is the common practice to collect the funds from the local sympathisers. Responsibilities have been decentralised to enable the effective functioning of the union. Thus, each department is represented by a union head. Any grievance in a particular department will be brought to the notice of the union-head who seeks redress from the foreman. If it is not amicably settled at this level, the matter will be brought to the notice of union officials who will then approach a higher authority in the mill. Some of the complaints of the workers are :

- 'This tool is too dull',
- 'this machine is out of order',
- 'the stock we are getting is not up to the standard',
- 'this job is too hard',
- 'this work is too dirty',
- 'the management is often shifting us from one place to another',
- 'the worker is not properly recognized here', and
- 'no bonus is paid this year'.

The majority of the strikes during the past four years seem to have been precipitated upon the initiative of the workers in general, and some times even on the initiative of a single worker. However, the union takes upon its shoulders the responsibility to conduct the strike. It was gathered from the interviews with the workers that their dissatisfaction is grounded on their resentment towards the mill management. The resentment is not in any way aroused by their dissatisfaction towards the behaviour of

the supervisor or sardar, even though they register casual complaints about the cavalier treatment meted out to them by these sardars or supervisors. All the forty and odd strikes that took place during the last four years were the result of the refusal on the part of the management to grant loans out of the provident fund collections and other such matters. The major issues like the settlement of bonus in the weaving section and the question of higher wages have been amicably settled through the discussions around the table by the parties concerned.

A works-committee under the Industrial Disputes Act (sec.5) has come into operation. An agreement was also entered into, stipulating the participation of workers representatives, in matters of the disciplinary proceedings against workmen. Now, negotiations are being initiated in the presence of the Labour Commissioner, to straighten out the differences between the management and workers, chalk out a progressive production programme and formulate a healthy wage structure.

Conclusions

In view of the facts that have been brought to light by this piece of investigation, it is evident, that to maintain good relations with the employees, the management has to adopt a method of recruitment wherein no discrimination is shown between the local workers and those from Calcutta. Further it is obvious that a worker having some education and training will prove better than the uneducated worker in appreciating the responsibilities involved in the efficient functioning of any industrial concern. The management will have to take upon themselves as part of their onerous responsibilities to educate the employees, once they are engaged by the industry. Also, it will be part of their duty to provide facilities for turning the unskilled worker into a skilled worker through the medium of training. And, to provide the workers with some incentive, the management

should also try to promote the deserving worker from a lower job to a higher one.

Jute is an exporting industry in India. It earns foreign exchange to the national exchequer. It obtains its raw material from agriculture and converts it into a finished product. Hence, no stone should be left unturned in promoting an increasing production. There is no doubt that hygienic working conditions in the mill are one of the contributing factors for augmenting production. Finally as a step towards maintaining hygienic and workable conditions, the management should devise means for the dispersal and diffusion of the ear-splitting noise and din generated by the machinery. This would help considerably to relieve the tension and irritability of both staff and workers.

Lastly, a word about improving industrial relations in the mill. Like most Indian managements, the management of this mill is intent on fulfilling the letter of the law. Many benefits and amenities imposed by the law on behalf of the workers have been implemented. But the attitude of management towards their workers requires a change in the direction of willingness to co-operate with the workers and to make the latter feel that they too have a stake in the industry. No doubt it is difficult for managements to rid themselves of suspicion when dealing with unions led by outsiders especially if they be Communists. But by their sympathy and understanding of the needs and rights of the worker, managements can go far to developing a consciousness of co-operation among the workers. No doubt the use of some of the techniques and skills of enlightened management in the West will improve the situation, but the essential focal point of change is management's attitude towards the workers — to consider them not as mere hands, but as co-partners in a joint endeavour.

C. Balakrishna

The Church and National Culture

(Continued)

The Church wants Unity, not Uniformity

That means that we ought not to think of this unity which we find existing, *de jure* and *de facto*, in the human race, as the unity of a heap ; the individual citizen is not a grain of sand among countless other grains of sand. The members of a common-wealth are bound together by an order which is carefully fitted together and disposed ; their need for one another is mutual, and affects this one or that at one time more than another ; and the whole is regulated by their natural, that is by their Providential, instincts and destinies.

And as nations become more civilized, they become more highly differentiated in their ways of life and of managing their affairs. That is no reason why they should renounce the unity of the human family. Rather, they should enrich that family by making their own contribution to its variety, according to their several endowments. They should exchange, mutually, the advantages they enjoy ; and that is a thing which can only be done satisfactorily where a lively, burning charity unites us all in a common brotherhood, as sons of the same Father and men redeemed by the same divine Blood.

The Church of Jesus Christ is the repository of His wisdom ; she is certainly too wise to discourage or belittle those peculiarities and differences which mark out one nation from another. It is quite legitimate for nations to treat those differences as a sacred inheritance and guard them at all costs. The Church aims at unity, a unity determined and kept alive by that supernatural love which should be actuating everybody ; she does not aim at a uniformity which would only be external in its effects, and would cramp the natural tendencies of the nations concerned. Every nation has its own genius, its own qualities, springing from the hidden roots of its being. The wise development, the encouragement within limits, of that genius, those qualities, does not harm, and if a nation cares to take precautions, to lay down rules, for that end, it has the Church's approval. She is mother enough to befriend such projects with her prayers, so long as all is done without prejudice to those duties which the common origin and the common destiny of the whole human race impose upon us.

Indeed, she could give no better proof of this than the great care with which, at all times, her missionaries have acted. She looks upon the principle in question as the guiding star which she must never lose light of in the pilgrimage of her apostolate. The missionaries of the divine word devote years of patient labour to the study of conditions; they spare no effort to understand the civilization and the institutions of the people they are dealing with; and then they try to cultivate and develop the individual gifts of that people in such a way as to secure the richest possible harvest for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Anything in the national customs that is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and false doctrine is always carefully considered and, if possible, preserved intact. In a particular case of this kind, which called for prudence and wise treatment, Our Predecessor generously adopted a view which marks him out and will always mark him out as a great intellect and a great lover of souls. It is hardly necessary to tell you, Venerable Brethren, that We intend to follow, without hesitation, the same course. All those who embrace the unity of the Catholic Church, whatever their race or their speech, may rest assured that they will have the full rights of sons in the house of our common Father, in which all live by the law and in the peace of Jesus Christ. That this principle of equitable treatment may be brought gradually into operation, candidates are being chosen from the various native races to fill up, gradually, the episcopal and priestly ranks in their own countries. We hope to give practical proof of Our intentions in this matter, on the coming feast of Christ the King, when We mean to confer the episcopal dignity on twelve priests who have been chosen out to be, as it were, the representatives of their various nations.

Bitter contentions are dividing the minds of men at this time, and rendering the unity of the human family. At this time, then, all Our children, scattered throughout the world, shall have proof that the teaching, the practice, the mind of the Church is unchanged. She can never recede from the position taken by the Apostle of the Gentiles, when he wrote: "Clothe yourselves in the character of the new man, the man who is continually being renewed into a state of fuller knowledge, to correspond with the image of his Creator; with whom there is neither Gentile nor Jew, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, no barbarian and Scythian, no slavery and freedom, but Christ is all things and in all things." (Col, 3, 10-11)

(Encyclical Letter SUMMI PONTIFICATUS, 20 October 1939)

The Missionary does not 'Transplant' European Civilisation

The herald of the Gospel and the messenger of Christ is an apostle. His office does not demand that he transplant European civilization and culture, and no other, to foreign soil, there to take root and propagate itself. His talk in dealing with these people, who sometimes boast an ancient and highly developed culture of their own, is to teach and form them so that they are ready to accept willingly and in practice the principles of Christian life and morality — principles, one might add, that fit into any culture, provided it be good and sound, and which give that culture greater force in safeguarding human dignity and in gaining human happiness. Catholic inhabitants of missionary countries, although they are, first of all, citizens of the Kingdom of God and members of His great family, do not, for all that, cease to be citizens of their earthly fatherland.

(Address to the Directors of the Pontifical Missionary Society, 24 June 1944)

The Supranational Character of the Church

The Catholic Church, of which Rome is the centre, is supranational by its very nature. This has two implications, one negative and the other positive. The Church is a mother — Sancta Mater Ecclesia — a true mother, mother of all nations and all peoples no less than of all men individually. And precisely because a mother, she does not, and cannot, belong exclusively to this or that people, nor even more to one than to others, but equally to all.

Since she is the mother, she cannot be a stranger anywhere ; she dwells, or at least should, because of her nature, dwell among all people. Moreover, while the mother with her husband and children form a family, the Church, in virtue of a union incomparably more intimate, deeper and more perfect than is possible for the family, forms the Mystical Body of Christ. The Church is then supra-national because it is an indivisible, universal whole....

From this it becomes clear that a sacrilegious attack has been and is made against the TOTUS CHRISTUS, the Whole Christ, while at the same time a dastardly blow has been struck against the unity of mankind, whenever an attempt has been, or is made to put the Church, like a prisoner and slave, in the service of this or that particular people, to tie her up within the narrow confines of a single nation, or on the other hand, to ostracize her

from any nation. Such a mutilation of the Church's integrity has entailed and entails for the peoples who are victims of it — to a degree proportionate to its duration — the lessening of their real welfare and of their full vitality....

She is supra-national because she extends the same love to all nations and peoples; she is also supra-national, as We have already said, because nowhere is she a stranger. She lives and grows in all countries of the world, and they all contribute to her life and growth.

There was a time when ecclesiastical life, in its visible manifestations, flourished especially in the countries of old Europe, from which it flowed, like a majestic river, to what could then be called the outer limits of the world. Today it appears rather as a sharing of life and energy between all the members of the Mystical Body of Christ on earth.

Not a few regions in other continents have long ago outlived the phase of missionary formation in the ecclesiastical development. They are governed by their own Hierarchy and give spiritual and material benefits to the Universal Church from which once they only received such benefits.

Is there not revealed in this progressive enrichment of the supernatural and even natural life of mankind the true significance of the Church's supra-national character? She is not, because of this supra-national character, placed aloft as though suspended in an inaccessible and intangible isolation above the nations; for just as Christ was in the midst of men, so too His Church, in which He continues to live, is placed in the midst of the peoples.

As Christ assumed a real human nature, so, too, the Church takes to herself the fulness of all that is genuinely human, whenever and however she finds it, and transforms it into a source of supernatural energy.

Thus ever more fully is verified in the Church of today that phenomenon which St. Augustine praised in his 'City of God': "the Church, he wrote, recruits her citizens from all nations, and in every language assembles her community of pilgrims on earth; she is not anxious about diversities in customs, laws, institutions; she does not cut off or destroy any of these but rather preserves and

observes them. Even the differences in different nations she directs to the one common end of peace on earth, as long as they do not impede the worship of the one supreme, and true God".

Like a powerful lighthouse, the Church, in her universal integrity, casts her beam of light over those dark days through which we pass. No less obscure were those in which the great Doctor of Hippo saw the world which he loved so dearly begin to founder. That light was then his comfort and, as it shone out, he greeted, in a prophetic vision, the dawning of a happier day. His love for the Church — it was no other than his love for Christ — was his consolation and his happiness.

God grant that all those who today, amid the sorrows and perils of their native land, endure sufferings like those of Augustine, may, like him, find their solace and support in love of the Church, of that great universal home which, according to God's promise, will last to the end of time.

For our part, We desire to make that home ever more solid, ever more attractive to all without exception. Hence we desire to leave nothing undone that may reflect outwardly the supra-national character of the Church, because it is the expression of her love for Christ, Whom she sees and serves in the rich variety of her members scattered throughout the whole world.

(Address on the Supra-nationality of the Church, 24 December 1945)

The Church is continually adapting Herself

If at certain periods or in certain places, one or other civilization, one or other ethnic group or social class has made its influence felt in the Church above others, this does not yet mean that the Church is tied down to any such group or that she has become, as it were, fossilized at a certain moment of history, so as to make further development impossible. On the contrary, bending over man with ceaseless care and attention, listening to the beating of his heart, she knows all the deepest hankerings of that heart, with that clear-sighted intuition and penetrating understanding which she can only derive from the supernatural light of Christ's doctrine and the supernatural warmth of His divine love. Thus the Church in her onward course watches, without pause or conflict, the divinely guided course of times and circumstances. This is the need and

significance of her vital law of continuous adaptation, which some, incapable of grasping such a magnificent concept, have interpreted or described as opportunism. No; the world-embracing comprehension of the Church has nothing in common with the narrowness of a sect or with the exclusiveness of an imperialism tied to its own traditions.

(Address to the Consistory, 20 February, 1946)

The Human Elements of the Liturgy can change

In the liturgy there are human elements as well as divine. The latter, obviously, having been established by the Divine Redeemer cannot under any circumstances be changed by men; but the human elements may be modified in various ways approved by the hierarchy under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, according as time, circumstances, and the needs of souls may demand. This explains the admirable variety of rites in East and West; it explains the progressive development where particular religious customs and pious practices gradually come into existence though earlier times show very little trace of them, while others which in course of time had fallen into disuse are revived. It is a proof that the immaculate Bride of Jesus Christ is vigourously alive; that in the course of ages there has been development in the language which she uses to express to her divine Bridegroom her own faith and inexhaustible love and that of her people. It is a proof of her skill as a Teacher, always inculcating and increasing in the faithful the 'sense of Christ'....

It is easy to understand that the progress of the fine arts, especially architecture, painting and music, have also had great influence in shaping and variously determining the external features of the liturgy....

It is true that the Church is a living organism and therefore grows and develops also in her liturgical worship; it is also true that, always saving the integrity of her doctrine, she accommodates herself to the needs and conditions of the time....

The use of the Latin language prevailing in a great part of the Church affords at once an imposing sign of unity and an effective safeguard against the corruption of true doctrine. Admittedly the adoption of the vernacular in quite a number of functions may prove of great benefit to the faithful. But to make such concessions is for the Apostolic See alone; nothing may be done

in this matter without her consent and approval, because, as We have said, the whole arrangement of the sacred liturgy is subject to her authority.

(Encyclical Letter *MEDIATOR DEI*, 20 November 1947)

It is not true that any and every philosophy can be accommodated to dogma

There is yet another danger all the more serious because it hides under the appearance of virtue. Many in fact, deploring the discord among men and the prevailing intellectual confusion, yet fired by an imprudent zeal for souls, plunge ahead in their eagerness to break down the barriers that divide good and honest men. They advocate an irenicism which, setting aside the questions that divide men, aims not only at joining forces against the onrush of atheism, but also at bridging contradictions in matters dogmatic. And as in former times there were men who questioned whether the traditional apologetics of the Church did not constitute an obstacle rather than a help to the winning of souls for Christ, so today some go so far as to question seriously whether theology and its method as carried on in our schools with the approval of ecclesiastical authority, should not only be improved, but completely made over, so that the kingdom of Christ could everywhere, among men of every culture and religious persuasion, be propagated more efficaciously.

Now if they only meant that ecclesiastical teaching and its method should, through the introduction of new ideas, be adapted to modern conditions and requirements, there would scarcely be any cause for alarm. But fired by an imprudent irenicism, some appear to consider as an obstacle to the restoration of fraternal union, tenets based on the laws and principles promulgated by Christ and on the institutions founded by Him, or those things which serve as ramparts and buttresses of the integrity of the faith, and the destruction of which would indeed bring about the union of all, but only in a common ruin....

How deplorable it is then that this philosophy, received and honoured by the Church, is scorned by some who are impudent enough to call it outmoded in form and rationalistic, as they say, in its thought processes....

And while despising our philosophy, they extol others, ancient or modern, oriental or occidental, by which they seem to imply that any kind of philosophy or theory can, with a few additions or corrections if necessary, be harmonized with Catholic dogma. But this is absolutely false, especially where there is question of those fictitious theories which go by the name of immanentism or idealism or materialism, whether historic or dialectic, or also existentialism, whether atheistic or the type that denies at least the validity of metaphysical reasoning. No Catholic can have the least doubt on that score....

(Encyclical Letter HUMANI GENERIS, 12 August 1950)

M. Bogaert

(To be continued)

Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne in a message to the annual convention of the National Catholic Rural Movement, called for a realistic attitude towards the problems of Asia.

He asked it to "consider the grave social problems of the Asian countries and to propose solutions animated by justice and charity." He suggested the two following :

(1) Firstly, that Australia should devote a far larger part of her national income towards the development of the Asian countries than is today spent under the Colombo plan.

(2) That the total exclusion of Asian from Australia should be abandoned and that we should admit a sufficient number of the different races to dispel for ever the myth of racial superiority inherent in the so-called 'White Australia Policy'.

Social Survey

The Third Plan

The goals of the Third Five Year Plan seem to be the following: (1) considerable increase in production, both agricultural and industrial; (2) creation of fuller employment for the unemployed and the under-employed; (3) a high rate of capital formation so as to pave the way for the realisation of a self-generating and self-sustaining economy; and (4) reduction of disparities in incomes and increase in opportunities. The national income will have to rise by 6 per cent per year during the duration of the Plan, and in order to make this possible the rate of savings will have to be raised to about 14 per cent per year by the end of the Third Five Year Plan. Once again the pattern of investment consistent with the above rate of growth would call for a high priority capital goods industries. One way of solving the tremendous unemployment problem is the development of rural small-scale and cottage industries, while at the same time, intensifying the yield per acre in agriculture.

These suggestions were put forward by the All-India Congress Committee's Planning Sub-Committee at the Seminar in Ootacamund. There is very little change from the ideology that framed the Second Five Year Plan. There is only more consciousness of the importance of agriculture and unemployment. It seems obvious that the same difficulties of lack of investment funds and rising prices will dog the progress of the Third Five Year Plan unless there is a radical change in the concept of the State's approach to advancing the national economy after the manner successfully implemented in West Germany.

Small Industries

According to a report on the programme and progress of Small scale industries issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry loans on easy terms of interest and repayment amounting to about Rs. 7 crores have been disbursed during the past three years to about 13,000 small industrial units and to 400 industrial co-operatives. This is in addition to loans worth Rs. 2.6 crores sanctioned by the State Bank of India. The Central Government sanctioned about Rs. 11.26 crores to State Governments for implementation of their small industries scheme during the last three years. A sum of Rs. 4.7 crores have been provided for this purpose in the current

years' budget. Fifteen Small Industries Service Institutes have been set up in each of the States including the Union territory of Delhi to provide technical guidance and assistance for setting up and running small industrial units. Over 11,500 small entrepreneurs have so far been provided technical guidance, etc. by these institutes. Over 2,200 machines valued at Rs. 1.84 crores have been delivered to small industries under the hire purchase programme for supply of machinery to small units. Contracts from Government purchasing departments for stores valued at over Rs. 3 crores have been secured by the National Small Industries Corporation. Products worth Rs. 25 lakhs produced by small industrial units have been sold by the Corporation. Thirty-two Industrial Estates have been completed of which 25 have been occupied by the small industrialists. Ninety-six such Estates, at the total cost of Rs. 11 crores, are expected to be completed by the end of this year and are likely to provide accommodation for 3600 factories and employment to about 50,000 persons.

Sugar Bonus

A settlement was arrived at on the issue of bonus between the representatives of the Indian Sugar Mill Workers Federation, Bihar Branch and the Indian National Sugar Mill Workers Federation on the 23rd March, 1959 at Calcutta. According to the agreement, the sugar factories in Bihar having labour unions affiliated to the Indian National Sugar Mill Workers' Federation would pay bonus for the year 1957-58 at 65 per cent of the normal rates of bonus. The normal rates of bonus were two annas per maund on production of sugar over 1 lakh mds., and up to 2 lakh mds., four annas per md. on production of 2 lakh mds. and up to 3½ lakh mds., and six annas per md. on production over 3½ lakhs mds., and upto 5 lakh mds. No bonus was payable if production did not exceed one lakh mds. The amount of bonus would be paid by the Factories by the end of April 1959 or before the closing of the crushing season, whichever was earlier, but in no case earlier than 7th April, 1959. It was also agreed that if any factory wanted exemption from the payment of bonus owing to losses, meagre profits or uneconomic working it should apply, by the 10th April 1959, to a tripartite committee consisting of one representative each of the Association and the Federation whose decision would be binding on both the parties. The Committee would dispose of all cases of exemption as early as possible and in any case within two months from the date of the settlement.

Roses Bloom in Rajasthan

Within sight of the historic battlefield of Haldighat, Rajasthan, 42 families engaged in growing rose gardens have come together to form a rose co-operative society, which handles the cultivation and export of roses, rose water and rose scent to Udaipur and other places. The Government has given them a loan of Rs. 2,500 for the purchase of machinery for distilling rose water and the manufacture of rose scent.

The cultivation of roses in Rajasthan is not a new thing. In Block areas situated close to the numerous lakes throughout central and southern Rajasthan, rose gardens are common. At Chavandiya, in Pisangan Block, near Ajmer, several Kacchawa (gardener) families maintain gardens with nearly 60,000 rose plants, the produce of which is largely exported to Ajmer, where the Jain temples and the famous masoleum of Chishti, the Muslim saint, provide a ready market. The Block staff encourages the people to run the rose industry on a co-operative basis, wherever possible.

The Food Front

In India it is generally agreed that food production is of crucial importance for the success of our plans. With the rapid increase in the growth of population, the Ford Foundation Team that recently visited India came to the conclusion that in order to be self-sufficient in food production, the country must produce 110 million tons by 1966. This will enable our people to enjoy a minimum level of nutrition which requires a daily intake of 15 ozs. of cereals, and 3 ozs. of pulses. It is expected that by 1966 consumption will rise to 88 million tons. As against this requirement, the current production stands at 70 million tons. At the present rate of increase, production at the end of the Third Five Year Plan, i.e., 1966, would rise to 32 million tons, leaving a deficit of 28 million tons. Such a large deficit can hardly be made up by imports of grain from abroad, and so India will have to depend on her own internal production. It is therefore necessary for India to raise her food production from 3.2 per cent during the period 1952-53 to 1958-59 to an average rate of 8.2 per cent during the next seven years. In other words the productivity rate in food production must be raised to a level of nearly 9 per cent a year.

To cope with the problem of increasing food production, the Team suggests that "management assistance to cultivators, com-

bined with supervised credit, and perhaps with joint ownership of equipment, offers a way to obtain the advantage of better management, while still retaining the incentives gained by individual operation." It is worth noting that the Report emphasises that it is not the lack of physical resources that set limits to the increase in food production. The country has the soil, climate, water and other physical resources for abundant food production. But to these physical advantages must be added human effort in the form of improved agricultural methods in effective combination with human effort, adapted to particular soils and crops.

The yield per acre in India in respect of all crops is very low when compared with the other countries of the world. For instance, the yield of rice per acre in India is about 750 lbs as against 2,461 lbs in Italy, 2,000 lbs in Japan and 1,468 lbs in the U.S.A. The most serious defect in the agricultural system of India which accounts for the low yield is the small size of the holdings. The average holding in India varies from about 3 acres in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to 12 acres in Bombay, as compared with 40 acres in Denmark, 82 acres in the U.K., 159 acres in the U.S.A. and 234 acres in Canada. Hence our small holdings need to be consolidated and the advantages of farming that are concomitant to larger holdings be utilised.

Shaktiman

The production of India's first army truck, christened the "Shaktiman", has aroused a fierce controversy as to the relative merits of the public and the private sector. The Shaktiman is a three ton military truck, and is fitted with a multi-fuel engine capable of being operated by petrol, diesel, kerosene and in cases of emergency, even by vegetable oil. It will be able to negotiate rough terrain, muddy roads and all climatic conditions in our country of heavy monsoons side by side with dry, dusty and deserted patches of landscape.

It was Mr. Nehru who let fly the first blast that set off the controversy when at the inauguration ceremony of Shaktiman, he commended the efficiency of the public sector and asked private businessmen to emulate this worthy example. The spokesmen of the private sector like the *Eastern Economist* have retaliated by asking the Prime Minister to go over the scathing criticism in the numerous reports of the Estimates Committee.

According to Mr. Krishna Menon, the Shaktiman has been produced at a cost so economical that it will be put on the market at a price much lower than imported trucks of the same variety. This may be true but the cost of the Shaktiman has not been calculated with any accuracy so far and moreover the imported trucks have to pay very heavy import duties, which greatly adds to their selling price. The controversy over the cost of the Shaktiman is only one particular instance of the acute argument that is raging over the relative merits of the public and the private sector in India. In a State industry costs are not easy to determine. Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao recently maintained that the public enterprises should make profits and find their own capital resources by ploughing their profits back into industry. This is a suggestion that is worth its salt. But the danger is that the profits can easily be made by raising prices of the goods produced by the public enterprise, since they are mostly monopolistic ventures.

Glass and Ceramic Industry

Prominent among the new and expanding industries in India is the glass and ceramic industry. A recent estimate puts the annual production of glassware and chinaware as worth Rs. 3.5 crores and Rs. 1.3 crores respectively. Last year the production of glass alone registered an increase of 13 per cent over that in the previous year. This increase has been especially pronounced in the manufacture of such items as sheet glass, thermos flasks and bottle-ware. However the present rate of expansion is not sufficiently high to cope with the increasing demand for glassware, porcelain and chinaware. This fact constitutes a big incentive for the growth of the glass and ceramic industry, which has not been covered by the Second Five Year Plan. Even for ceramic, the production has increased by 18 per cent during the last year, mainly in the manufacture of sanitary-ware, glazed tubes, high tension insulators and crockery.

A. Fonseca

